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Talking Points for the DDCI
(as of 1000 EDT, 10 February 1984)

Lebanon Update

The Phase III evacuation of US citizens and selected third-country nationals is almost complete.

- Druze militiamen--who surround the Embassy compound--are allowing the evacuation to proceed smoothly because they believe that a diminished US presence will weaken President Gemayel.
- Most Druze and Muslim militiamen in West Beirut do not appear particularly hostile toward US citizens, but there are reports suggesting that Musawi-type radical Shias--who are vehemently anti-American--are on the streets as well. [REDACTED]

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The situation in Beirut has stabilized with the city divided by the Green Line into a Druze/Muslim-controlled western sector and a Lebanese Army/Christian-controlled eastern sector--as was the case during the civil war in 1975-76. The government has no authority in West Beirut. [REDACTED]

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US Naval vessels again shelled antigovernment artillery positions this morning.

- Although US actions may temporarily silence opposition gunners, they almost certainly will spark further street fighting between the militias and Army units across the Green Line and will harden Druze and Muslim determination to eliminate Gemayel.
- Israeli warplanes bombed Palestinian concentrations in the mountains east of Beirut this morning in retaliation for the rocket attack yesterday on Metulla. [REDACTED]

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There has been no movement toward a political settlement. Ambassador Bartholomew says that Gemayel, encouraged by US military actions and by moderate statements by Sunni religious leaders, plans to stay on as president.

- Gemayel's opponents, however, will not allow him to temporize indefinitely. They want to see their demands met, and they are growing impatient with Gemayel's refusal to act or to resign. [REDACTED]

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Gemayel and Army Commander Tannous continue to press the US to support an Army offensive to block the infiltration route through the Alayh ridge into southern Beirut.

- These proposals indicate the government's refusal to come to terms with political realities. [REDACTED]

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